

REMARKS

The official action dated September 15, 2006 has been carefully reviewed. Claims 8 and 10-20 are pending in this application. Claims 1-7 and 9 have been canceled. Claims 13-20 have been added. Applicants request reconsideration of this application in light of the remarks presented herein.

CLAIM REJECTIONS BASED UPON § 102 - SAKURAI

In the official action, the Examiner rejected claims 1 and 5-12 under 35 U.S.C. §§ 102(a),(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Pat. No. 6,397,586 to Sakurai et al. ("Sakurai"). Claims 1, 5-7, and 9 have been canceled. Claim 8 has been amended to include limitations not found in Sakurai. As such, Applicants believe the amendments to claim 8 have rendered the Examiner's rejection of claim 8 moot. Original claims 10-12 and newly added claims 13-20 are dependent upon claim 8. Therefore, Applicants believe that the rejection of claims 10-12 should be withdrawn.

Applicants would like to note that a European counterpart application containing claims similar to those pending in the subject application (*i.e.*, Ser. No. 10/652,841) has issued as European Patent No. 1400665, which is contained in an Information Disclosure Statement included herewith.

CLAIM REJECTIONS UNDER § 102 - MATSUMOTO

In the official action, the Examiner rejected claims 1, 5, and 6 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Pat. No. 5,544,482 to Matsumoto et al. ("Matsumoto"). Claims 1, 5, and 6 have been canceled rendering the Examiner's rejections moot.

CLAIM REJECTIONS UNDER § 103 - MATSUMOTO

In the official action, the Examiner rejected claims 2-4 and 7 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) for obviousness over Matsumoto. Claims 2-4 and 7 have been canceled rendering the Examiner's rejections moot.

CLAIM REJECTIONS UNDER § 103 - SAKURAI

In the official action, the Examiner rejected claims 2-4 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) for obviousness over Sakurai. Claims 2-4 have been canceled rendering the Examiner's rejections moot.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing remarks, it is submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Action to that end is hereby solicited.

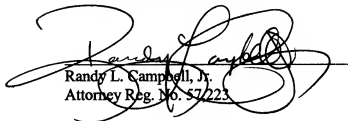
In the event that there are any questions related to this response in particular, or to the application in general, the undersigned would appreciate the opportunity to address those questions directly in a telephone interview to expedite the prosecution of this application for all concerned.

It is respectfully requested this paper be considered as a Petition for an Extension of Time sufficient to effect a timely response and shortages in other fees be charged, or any overpayment

in fees be credited, to the Account of Barnes & Thornburg, Deposit Account No. 10-0435 with reference to file 9501-73179.

Respectfully submitted,

BARNES & THORNBURG LLP

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Randy L. Campbell, Jr.", is written over a horizontal line. The signature is stylized with large, flowing loops and a long horizontal stroke extending to the left.

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